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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No.1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED

FEB 01 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. NAME OF PROPERTY:

Historic name: West Milam Street Mercantile Historic District

Other name/site number: N/A

2. LOCATION

Street & number: Roughly bounded by Sunset, Burleson and Caney Streets along the 600 block of West Milam Street.

Not for publication: N/A

City/town: Wharton

State: TX *County:* Wharton

Code: 481 *Zip Code:* 77488

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property: *Contributing Noncontributing*

<u> 5 </u>	<u> 4 </u> buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 5 </u>	<u> 4 </u> Total

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Laurie J. Munnell
Signature of certifying official

27 Jan. 1993
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

 entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

Delores Byers 3/18/93

 determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the
National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain):

for
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

***USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store; Department Store; Warehouse
DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current: COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store; Department Store
DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH CENTURY AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Late Victorian
OTHER: L-plan

<i>Materials: foundation</i>	Brick
<i>walls</i>	Brick; Wood
<i>roof</i>	Asphalt; Metal
<i>other</i>	Concrete, Stucco

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

☒ *See continuation sheet*

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1901-1942

Significant Dates: 1901

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. ☒ *See continuation sheet*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

Description:

The West Milam Street Mercantile Historic District is a small intact grouping of 1- and 2-story commercial buildings and a single-family dwelling constructed between 1901 and 1942. All significant properties face either north or south and align West Milam Street at the intersection of Sunset Street. The significant properties, except the dwelling, are set close to the property line and on concrete sidewalks that are parallel to the street. The 2-story brick Deaton Grocery Building visually dominates the district while the 1-story Gifford Mercantile Company Building (later Gifford Motor Company) anchors the district with the largest square footage. Both buildings reflect Late Victorian influences including molded brick cornices, arched double entries, and in the Deaton Building, molded brick string courses. All remaining buildings are either of brick or wood frame construction and are largely detached and free-standing. False-front parapets and awnings extended over the sidewalk are prominent features of the remaining buildings. The single-family frame dwelling is an excellent example of a vernacular L-plan with Late Victorian detailing. Noncontributing buildings are all in the northern half of the district and are generally 1-story simple wooden frame or masonry construction. The scale, size and ca. 1960s construction dates make the properties Noncontributing. Five properties are determined Contributing; four Non-contributing.

The West Milam Street Mercantile Historic District is a small intact grouping of 1- and 2-story commercial buildings and a single-family dwelling constructed between 1901 and 1942. The district is roughly one half mile from the central business district of Wharton but immediately adjacent the Old Texas and New Orleans Railroad Depot. All buildings face either north or south and align West Milam Street at the intersection of Sunset Street. Most of the properties immediately front concrete sidewalks that run parallel to the streets. Streets within the district are paved with concrete and have high curbs; Sunset Street breaks from a straight north-south plan and curves slightly to the northeast following the railroad tracks. The terrain is generally flat with landscaping consisting of various types of shrubbery and a few pecan trees; otherwise, the district is devoid of vegetation.

The 2-story brick Deaton Grocery Building visually dominates the district while the 1-story Gifford Mercantile Company Building (later Gifford Motor Company) anchors the district with the largest square footage. Both buildings reflect Late Victorian influences including molded brick cornices, arched double entries, and in the Deaton Building, molded brick string courses. All remaining buildings are either of brick or wood frame construction and are largely detached and free-standing. False-front parapets and awnings extended over the sidewalk are prominent features of the remaining buildings. The single-family frame dwelling is an excellent example of a vernacular L-plan with Late Victorian detailing. Noncontributing buildings are all in the northern half of the district and are generally 1-story simple wooden frame or masonry construction. The scale, size and ca. 1960s construction dates make the properties Noncontributing. Five properties are determined Contributing; four Non-contributing.

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Continuation Sheet

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W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

INVENTORY OF MAJOR PROPERTIES

Site No. 330, Old Deaton Grocery Company, 1901, 660 West Milam Street, Contributing.

2-story building with load-bearing brick walls facing south. The five-bay principal (south) facade has a double-door entrance on the ground floor with round-arched hoodmold. All windows are 2/2 double-hung and have vertical muntins and segmental-arched hoodmolds. Molded brick string courses wrap around the building and unify first and second floor windows. The building features an elaborate parapet with corbeled brickwork and raised centerpiece. Segmental-arched loading docks are located on the west facade. A Noncontributing commercial building (ca. 1960) is attached to the west elevation of the building. This Noncontributing property does not affect the overall integrity of the Old Deaton Grocery Company building. The building also features a ghost-sign of a 20th century tenant which appears to read "Wharton Groc. & Produce Co."

This 2-story brick building originally housed the Locke Feed Store and was later occupied by the Deaton Grocery Company, two important early businesses in Wharton.

The Old Deaton Grocery Company is an excellent example of early commercial or warehouse architecture. Its round-arched hoodmolds, segmental-arched hoodmolds and an elaborate parapet with corbeled brick are characteristics of late 19th- and early 20th century commercial architecture. The string courses unifying first and second floor windows are quite rare for early Wharton commercial buildings. The building's plan clearly indicates a central, open work space for handling large amounts of material. The absence of large display windows on the principal facade further indicate the functional uses of the interior.

Site No. 331, Commercial Building, ca. 1920, 642-52 West Milam Street, Contributing.

1-story frame commercial building with wood siding facing north. This building encompasses about half of the north side of the 600 block of West Milam Street. This multi-unit building has nine double-door entrances under a continuous shed-roof awning. Two end units on the east and west elevations feature false-front parapets that conceal gable roofs covered with metal.

The building is associated with Wharton's economic prosperity during the 1920s. It has housed a variety of wholesale and retail businesses since its construction.

This building is a rare example of a relatively intact wood-frame commercial building in Wharton and retains a high degree of integrity. Its shed-roof canopy, false-front parapets and gabled roof are characteristic of early 20th century commercial architecture in Wharton.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

Site No. 388, Gifford Mercantile (Motor) Company Building, ca. 1910, 661 West Milam Street, Contributing.

1-story brick building with load-bearing brick walls facing north. Two wooden double door service entrances with round-arched hoodmolds are located on the north facade. Detailing consists of a simple corbeled brick parapet. An inset service bay is accessed at the northwest corner of the building. Large display windows are located within the service bay and the north facade.

Sanborn maps reveal that George Gifford operated a business on this and adjoining properties as early as 1900. By 1919, this building housed the Gifford Mercantile Company (later Motor Company). This business offered auto sales and services to local residents. A furniture store later occupied this building for many years.

A commercial building retaining a high degree of integrity. This building is a good example of early commercial architecture in Wharton. The character defining aspects of the building, such as inset service bay, follow typical auto dealership design of the early 20th century. The display windows are also typical of dealerships. The building probably was constructed in stages as the business evolved and the auto business grew in the first three decades of the century. Round-arched hoodmolds and simple parapet with corbeled brickwork are characteristics of Late Victorian, turn-of-the-century architecture.

Site No. 389, Commercial Building, ca. 1930, 642 West Milam Street, Contributing.

1-story frame commercial building with stuccoed veneer on exterior facing north. A commercial building with two storefronts and 2 double-door entrances under an awning. A simple 3-part parapet above each entrance extends across the front facade. A gabled roof with metal sheathing covers the building. The stuccoed veneer exterior was applied at an unknown date.

This 1-story commercial building is a typical example of early 20th century commercial architecture. Its canopy roof and 3-part parapet are characteristic of early commercial architecture Wharton.

Site No. 390, Peine-Leeds House, ca. 1905, 637 West Milam Street, Contributing.

1-story wood frame L-plan dwelling with wood siding facing north. Ornate Victorian jigsaw detailing on front-wing soffits and front gabled-end bargeboard. The front wing has angled corners creating a 5-sided bay. The house is covered by an asphalt shingle hipped roof with gabled extensions. Windows are 2/2 wooden, double hung.

The original owner of the property was Wally Peine, an important local businessman, who acquired it in 1893 for \$200. Wally Peine sold it to L.F. Leeds in 1907 for \$1,350. The dramatic increase in price suggests that Peine constructed the house on the property. The house remained in the Leeds family until 1958.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

The Leeds House is a good example of the vernacular L-plan. Its ornate jigsawed detailing, hipped-roof with gabled extensions and angled corners creating a 5-sided bay are characteristic of the vernacular L-plan. This house retains a high degree of integrity and is considered Contributing to the district.

Commercial building at 664 West Milam Street, ca. 1960, Noncontributing.
1-story concrete-block building.

Commercial building at 668 West Milam St, ca. 1960, Noncontributing.
1-story wood frame building with metal roof.

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Section number 8 Page 5

W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

Statement of Significance:

The West Milam Street Mercantile Historic District consists of nine 1- and 2-story buildings constructed between 1900-1942. All Contributing buildings in the district, except for a single-family dwelling, housed retail and wholesale operations. With the exception of Site No. 331, commercial buildings in this district are detached and freestanding. This pattern contrasts sharply with the Wharton County Courthouse Commercial Historic District (NR, 1991) where almost all the buildings share common or party walls. The buildings in this district retain a high degree of integrity and reflect the distinctive style of turn-of-the-century commercial architecture. The district is eligible under Criterion C for architecture and associated with the context: *Community Development in Wharton, Texas, 1875-1942*.

Commercial buildings in the district are influenced by Late Victorian and turn-of-the-century architectural styles. False-front parapets, gabled roofs, round and segmental-arched hoodmolds, and corbeled brickwork are characteristics of early Wharton commercial architecture. Additionally, the Old Deaton Grocery Company building (Site No. 330) features string courses that are unusual for early Wharton commercial architecture. The Peine-Leeds House is an excellent example of the L-plan popular during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Its jigsaw brackets, hipped-roof with gabled extensions and angled corners creating a 5-sided bay are characteristic of the vernacular L-plan.

Most of the buildings in the district are associated with a period of economic growth during the early 20th century. The arrival of the railroad and construction of a depot that was separate from the central business district led to the creation of this distinct commercial area. Accompanying and relatively steady economic prosperity following the railroad during the first few decades gave rise to a mercantile class. Some of these people established wholesale and retail operations in the West Milam Street area. The Deaton Building is probably the oldest property and reflects its functional use as a warehouse and handling center adjacent the rail service. The Gifford Motor Company Building is typical of early auto dealerships indicating that the district developed with a number of uses that were somewhat connected to the nearby railroad.

Since the 1950s, many early commercial buildings Wharton have been altered or modified. Consequently, Wharton has very few cohesive concentrations of historic commercial buildings that retain their integrity. The buildings in this district retain a high degree of integrity and consequently still reflect the distinctive style of turn-of-the-century commercial architecture.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See bibliography of historic context statement.

 x See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

 previously listed in the National Register

 previously determined eligible by the National Register

 designated a National Historic Landmark

 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

 x State historic preservation office (Texas Historical Commission)

 Other state agency

 Federal agency

 Local government

 University

 Other -- Specify Repository:

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Approximately 1 1/2 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 14 781100 3245940 B 14 781120 3245920

C 14 781100 3245820 D 14 781040 3245840

 X See continuation sheet. (10-6)

Verbal Boundary Description:

Boundary Justification:

11. FORM PREPARED BY (assisted by Dwayne Jones, Preservation Planner, Alan Carey, Preservation Planner Intern, and THC staff)

Name/Title: Ed Galloway and Ralph Newlan

Organization: Hardy-Heck-Moore

Date: July 1989, January 1992

Street & Number: 2112 Rio Grande

Telephone: 512-478-8014

City or Town: Austin

State: TX *Zip:* 78705

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 6

W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the southwest corner of Sunset Street and the alley between West Milam Street and Burleson streets, thence north along Sunset Street to the intersection of Sunset and West Milam Streets, thence continuing north along Sunset Street approximately 125 feet, thence east 145 feet, thence south 60 feet to West Milam Street along the east property line of 642-52 West Milam Street, thence east along West Milam Street 60 feet, thence south along east property line of 637 West Milam Street to the alley between West Milam and Burleson streets, thence west along alley until reaching the point of the origination.

Boundary Justification:

The district encompasses all properties historically associated with the development of this enclave of mercantile businesses and an adjacent dwelling associated with an important business family that dates from the period of significance. Surrounding properties are separated by undeveloped land or major thoroughfares. The district is both visually and physically distinct.

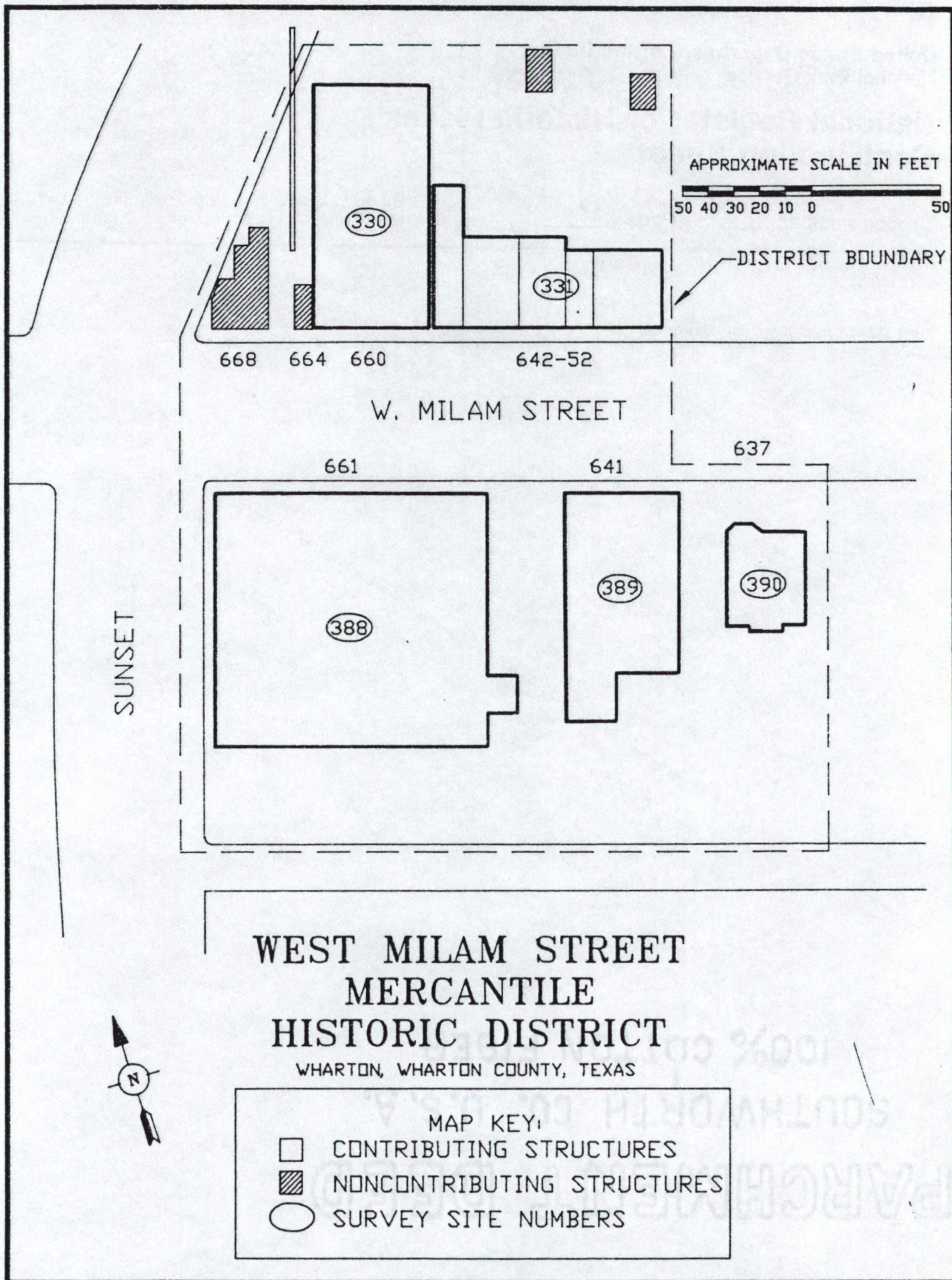
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number MAPS Page 7

W. Milam St. Mercantile Hist. Dist.
Wharton, Wharton County, Texas

See district map on reverse



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Section number _____ Page _____

Wharton MPS

Wharton County, TEXAS

Date Listed

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 21. House at 401 North Richmond | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 22. House at 512 North Resident | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 23. Linn Street Historic District | Substantive Review | 3/18/93 |
| 24. Merrill--Roten House | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 25. Moran--Moore House | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 26. Speaker, J. H., House | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 27. St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 28. Texas and New Orleans Railroad Depot | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 29. Texas and New Orleans Railroad Bridge | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 30. West Milam Street Mercantile Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |
| 31. Worthing, Louis F., House | Entered in the
National Register | 3/18/93 |

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: West Milam Street Mercantile Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME: Wharton MPS

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Wharton

DATE RECEIVED: 2/01/93 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/16/93
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/04/93 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/18/93
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 93000125

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3/18/93 DATE Entered in the National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

___summary paragraph
___completeness
___clarity
___applicable criteria
___justification of areas checked
___relating significance to the resource
___context
___relationship of integrity to significance
___justification of exception
___other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



600 BLOCK WEST MILAM
WEST MILAM ST. MERCANTILE H.D.
WHARTON, WHARTON CO., TEXAS
36 OF 39



660 WEST MILAN
WEST MILAN ST. MERCANTILE B.D.
WHARTON, WHARTON CO., TEXAS
37 OF 39



NORTH BLOCK OF 600 BLOCK WEST MIAMI
WEST MIAMI ST. MERCANTILE H.D.
WHARTON, WHARTON CO., TEXAS
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SOUTH SIDE OF 600 BLOCK WEST MILAM
WEST MILAM ST. MERCANTILE H.D.
WHARTON, WHARTON CO., TEXAS
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Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500657